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**OUR WESTERN COAL.**

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### THE LITHGOW SEAM.

no spot of ground whereon a man can stand and say that immediately to the right of him is coal-bearing land, while on the left is a barren, treeless plain. It is known that the northern limit of the coal fields extends, in part, at least, into Greenland, and if a very enterprising geologist could somehow be able to say that from Greenland it goes below the sea through the Indian, into China, and perhaps to Japan, it is known that to the west the coal measures extend as far as Dubbo; it is not known whether to the eastward some of the seas pass under the sub-aqueous plateau of the Pacific, and thence to the high lands to the southward they may extend, enough for us to know at the present time that at about 2800 square miles of country in this State is proved to be coal-bearing; it

lands the circle formed by the known area. There are stretches of country where the mineral resources are not known, and there is a still greater probability that the same is true of the rest of the country. There are yet unknown areas in existence for the future to bring to light and perhaps to prove the existence of. The geological survey of the country will shed much more light upon these details upon which so many of our estimates are based. It may be taken that a fairly approximate knowledge of the mineral resources of the country will be obtainable from maps and books showing wherein our mineral belts of copper, iron, and where the coal and oil fields are located, and nothing.

There has been recently published by the Mining Department, from the pen of Mr. J. A. G. Reade, a very interesting and valuable volume on the geology and mineral resources of the western coal field; it is a book of the geological series, and is replete with geological data, and cannot be fully understood or appreciated by geologists, there is nevertheless a good deal of information which the ordinary man can get from it. It is a very interesting book, it is recorded that, in the Portland district a total area of 52 square miles is

geologically surveyed, or that the coal measures are not so extensive as is commonly assumed. In the Lithgow district 114 square miles have been surveyed, and 12 square miles of coal measures; in the district of Rylstone 350 square miles and 114 square miles of coal measures; in the Capertee district 1296 square miles and 1142 square miles of coal measures. These show that a large amount of work has been done; but it is not completed, and until it is the exact result of our coal surveying cannot be known. It is not so much a matter of unexplored areas as of unexplored mines and boundaries, and a large task to be accomplished. Much of the country is practically inaccessible. Briefly, it may be said that the country dealt with in this work embraces the principal parts of the counties of Cook and Hunter, with a considerable portion of the counties of Roxburgh and Phillip. However, the same

The western coal measures belong to the "Newcastle" series, which corresponds to the southern, or Illawarra, and the northern, or Gunnedah. They lie close to the margin of the coal basin, and have an average thickness of only 200 to 300 feet, or approximately half the maximum development of the

northern, or Newcastle. Three of the western coal seams have so far been mined where outcrops accessible to railway communication make exploitation profitable. The two, however, to a slight degree only. The "Lithgow" seam, the principal west, or "Lithgow" seam, is the principal seam, and, with two slight exceptions, at Ironbark and at Hartley Vale, furnishes the principal western output. Of the character of this seam, Mr. Carne says it is very regular, free from

But, taking the seams in their descending order, it is shown that the first is the "Bombay," or "top," seam. It is immediately on the base of the Hawkesbury series, and is more readily recognizable as the first seam on the foot of the vertical sandstone cliffs forming the upper valley walls. This seam is identical with the "Bull" seam of the southern

coal fields. It has been mined at Hartley, Main, Main Camp, and Katoomba, and is now being prospected on the Grose. Locally it is underlain and shadowed by the thicker Lithgow seam. Nevertheless, considerable interest attaches to it because of its correlation with the important Bull seam of the southern coal field and the Cremorne seam of the Sydney Harbour Billeries. "It is therefore destined to be a more accessible and chief source of supply than the one between that of the mountain

...and also between the latter and the shallower...  
...workings in the rising northern and south-western...  
...extensions of the warped Sydney coal field...  
...the great depth (2384 ft) in the Balmain shaft...  
...of the Sydney Harbour Collieries to the...  
...of the Katoomba seam, and doubtless...  
...increased thickness of intercalated strata, v...  
...probably preclude any of the lower seams...  
...being worked for a long period. The second...

30077ft in the Birthday shaft at Balmatua. The seam is about 8 ft thick, might be reached at a reasonable depth below the first, though it was untouched.

The "dirty" seam is so named because of its intrusive bands of foreign matter that are black, and the name, though not very elegant, is expressive. The coal of the Katoomba seam is noted to be of excellent quality. A geological note of interesting information regarding

will, or Katoomba, seam is given, showing it splits between the coast and the mountains, and again after leaving Lithgow. These are particulars which are not of the greatest importance in the present discussion. The Lithgow mines are too well known to require much description. They are the principal contributor to our supply of mountain coal. It is exported not only to Sydney but to the western portions of the State, but is a

**LITHGOW VALLEY COAL.**

A very short historical recapitulation will be more interesting to the general reader. The coal was first probably won in the western coalfield by Mr. Andrew Brown, of Bowdoin, in connection with his Coopersville flour mill, erected in 1848, or the substituted water-power industry of 1858, which still continues. While the Great Western Railway was being

The coal was dug for the railway company by men employed by a storekeeper here. Another bit of ancient history regarding this fact is that Mr. J. J. Poole, manager of the Centenary colliery, at Curlew, said that tunnelling was first viewed to commence on mining, inaugurated by him in 1860, at the hermitage Estate, of the Dublin Swart, and that M. Thomas Brown followed shortly afterwards on similar lines. Ekbank. The output for 1949 is recorded as "Hartley Blackman's" cap, 150 tons; Llanfyllid, 120 tons; and Egar, 187 tons.

on was 2366 tons; for 1872 it was 5221 tons, and for the following year 9865 tons, of which 4 came from Eskbank, and the rest from Herk. These were the days before there was a department of Mines in New South Wales. It was established in 1874, and in that year records show such a great advance that I attempted to ask whether the earlier record of output may not have understated it. The output for 1874 was 35,200 tons, Lithgow Valley contributing 1800 tons of the total, Esk Creek millinery, worked by Thomas Brown, M. L.

By 1907, Bowenfels Colliery Co., 8590; the Vale Colliery, 6,000; Bulkeley's coal mine, Blackmud Creek, Mudgee-road, 50 tons each. Eskbank closed in 1907 yielded 1,503,944 tons; then closed. Part of it was worked in connection with the ironworks, and 149,300 tons were raised from it. Lithgow Valley colliery opened the next biggest yielder, its total output between 1874 to 1904 aggregating 1,588,456 tons. The Vale of Clwydd has sent to the surface 1,511,536, and the Zig Zag 1,022,463. There have been 29 collieries opened in the western

let; 17 of them were working at the end of 1906, eight are marked as closed, others have been merged into other collieries, others have not been continuously worked, yet more are connected with shafts and works. Still, it is











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of the last half a century or two. A couple of long  
of the Sydney was changed. A couple of long  
s by Richards wound up with a capital that, inst

at the Victoria Barracks, and was by Captain  
by 6 goals to 1. Fitchings (3), Newman, and  
new to

Waldron, making a dash, was secured a

and he kicked a goal. Glass, 8 points (UNRELIABLE).

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